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TASS CHARGED CIA KIDNAPPED SOVIET OFFICIAL IN MANILA  
MOSCOW

The official news agency Tass accused the CIA on Wednesday of kidnapping a Soviet official in Manila, taking him to West Germany and trying to force him to defect. The CIA called the allegation "ridiculous."

Tass said the official, a representative of the Foreign Trade Ministry identified as Vladimir Ivanov, was eventually turned over to Soviet officials in West Berlin.

"The foul provocation by the CIA this time suffered a complete failure," Tass said.

In Washington, CIA spokeswoman Kathy Pearson said of the Tass claim: "It's a ridiculous story and the Soviets know it."

A State Department official, who asked not to be identified, said he recalls press reports in the Philippines some time ago about a Soviet trade mission representative who disappeared. But he said he has heard nothing recently.

The official said he was puzzled as to why the Soviets would remain silent on the alleged abduction for so long.

Tass said Ivanov was staying at the Holiday Inn in Manila, the Philippines capital, when he was abducted Jan. 20 by a man who pretended to bring him an urgent letter from a business with which he was dealing at the time, Tass said.

The visitor drugged Ivanov and the CIA then flew him to West Germany with the help of West German intelligence agents, Tass alleged.

In West Germany, Ivanov went on hunger strike and demanded to meet with Soviet authorities, Tass said. It said CIA agents held him for 18 days and tried to persuade him to defect.

When he refused, Tass asserted, "highly placed CIA agents flew into a West German military base from the United States with two 'doctors' who used narcotics and other drugs on Ivanov.

"News about the forced detention of Ivanov on a U.S. military base became known to Soviet authorities and the gangsters of the espionage agency were forced to turn him over to Soviet representatives in West Berlin," Tass said. "Ivanov returned to the Soviet Union."